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(U) The National Security Agency

(U) Defending Our Nation and Allies. Securing the Future.

(U) Introduction

(U) The National Security Agency (NSA) gathers and shares unique foreign intelligence and protects vital information and networks of the United States and its allies. Operating within a rigorous framework to protect legal and constitutional rights, NSA saves lives and advances America's goals and alliances. As a member of both the Intelligence Community (IC) and Department of Defense (DoD), NSA is well-positioned to carry out its mission.

(U) U.S. leaders, policy-makers, warfighters, law enforcement agencies, and IC agencies face some of the gravest national security challenges in U.S. history. To overcome the very real threats to our country, national decision-makers:

- (U) Need to know what our foreign intelligence targets are doing and what they are planning to do, and to understand their capabilities so our leaders can make timely and informed decisions and plans, and execute policies and operations;
- (U) Need to communicate and exchange information securely, so our adversaries cannot undermine our plans; and
- (U) Need to outmaneuver those who would do us harm in cyberspace.

(U) NSA is the world leader in cryptology – the art and science of making and breaking codes. It is this expertise – from its people and technology – that allows NSA to discover foreign intelligence targets' secrets, protect U.S. secrets, and outmaneuver our adversaries in cyberspace. NSA is designated as a Combat Support Agency, providing real-time support to our troops on the ground and supporting military operations around the world. More than 40,000 skilled and dedicated civilian and military personnel work globally to carry out these missions while at the same time protecting the privacy rights of the American people. This paper describes NSA's missions and functions, its role in the IC, and the vital partnerships that help NSA to defend the Nation and prepare for future challenges.

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(U) Mission

(U) NSA's mission is to provide a decisive information advantage for the U.S. and its allies. NSA accomplishes its missions through Signals Intelligence (SIGINT) and Information Assurance (IA) and by enabling Cybersecurity Operations (CSO).

- (U) **Signals Intelligence** – Through SIGINT, NSA provides foreign intelligence that gives decision-makers and warfighters access to the often-secret communications and information of adversaries and rivals.
- (U) **Information Assurance** – Through IA, NSA evaluates emerging technologies, conducts vulnerability analysis, and develops mitigations in order to prevent unauthorized access to U.S. classified and national-security-related information and systems. The IA mission also provides IA strategic guidance and [redacted]
- (U//~~FOUO~~) **Cybersecurity Operations** – SIGINT and IA enable and inform CSO. Harnessing the power of NSA's authorities, capabilities and intelligence, and its understanding of the cyber threat allows NSA to get ahead of foreign-based cyber adversaries and preempt significant cyber incidents against networks vital to the U.S. NSA counters our adversaries experience in cyberspace by discovering and sharing adversaries' plans, intentions, and capabilities; developing, planning, synchronizing and executing operations and mitigations to counter malicious cyber adversaries in real-time; and leading and collaborating across the USG, allied partners, and industry to increase collective understanding of our adversaries' cyber tradecraft.

(U) In order to prosecute NSA's missions, the Director, NSA, (DIRNSA) is entrusted with a number of authorities and community-wide responsibilities. Within the IC, the DIRNSA serves as the Functional Manager for Signals Intelligence. The Director is also a senior leader within DoD, and serves as the National Manager for National Security Systems (NSS)[1]. As DIRNSA, he leads a Combat Support Agency under the DoD; as Chief, Central Security Service, he oversees the military cryptologic system; and as Commander, U.S. Cyber Command (USCYBERCOM), he is a component commander under U.S. Strategic Command.

[1] (U) A "national security system" is any classified or unclassified system (including any telecommunications system) that involves intelligence activities, cryptologic activities related to national security, command and control of military forces, is an integral part of a weapon or weapons system, or is critical to the direct fulfillment of military or intelligence missions, operated by the U.S. Government, its contractors, or agents.

(U) Organization and Structure

(U) NSA continues to evolve to keep pace with ever-changing technology and to ensure that it remains the world's preeminent SIGINT and IA agency. NSA's structure enables it to continue to succeed in the face of growing technological and strategic challenges, while delivering outstanding mission outcomes for the Nation, today and in the future. It also reflects NSA's commitment to empowering its personnel, integrating its enterprise, and enabling innovation.

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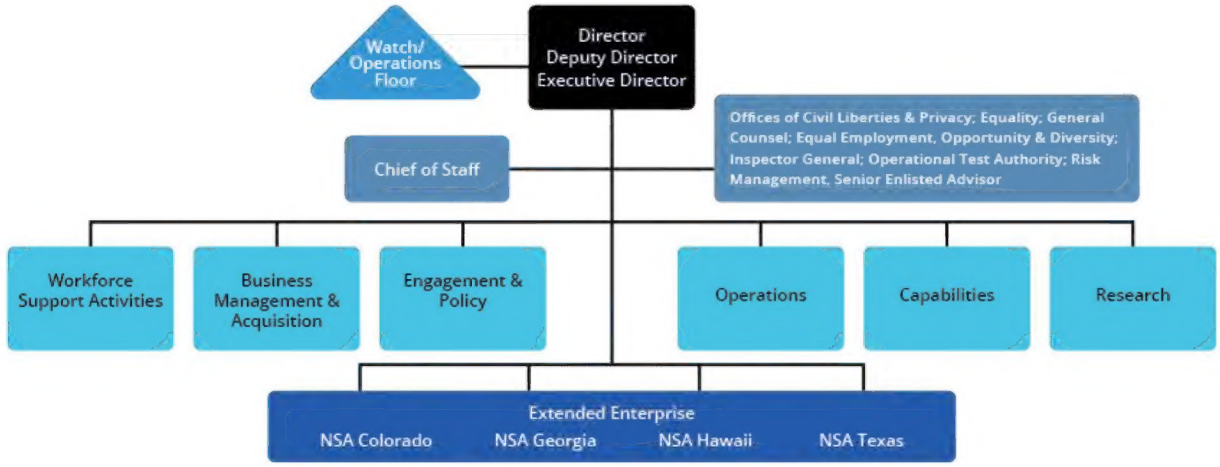

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(U) Principal Activities

(U) NSA is a large, complex, high-technology enterprise with a worldwide presence, and it performs a broad range of functions and activities to accomplish its missions and prepare for the future. The NSA enterprise comprises the Cryptologic Centers in Georgia, Texas, Colorado and Hawaii; numerous locations in the Baltimore/Washington, D.C., area; and smaller sites around the world. As with any global enterprise, myriad activities and processes are required to lead, manage, and govern NSA's missions and to support its workforce. These include financial and acquisition management, human resources, workforce development and succession planning, education and training, security and counterintelligence, facilities and logistics, and partner engagement. A brief overview of NSA's principal activities follows:

(U) **SIGINT Mission Activities** – Within the SIGINT mission, the principal activities are **acquiring**, **understanding and interpreting**, and **sharing information** with partners who can act upon it.

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- ~~(S//SI//REL TO USA, FVEY)~~ ***Acquiring information*** includes determining how best to obtain information responsive to partners' intelligence needs, gaining access to that information, and capturing it. This requires a fundamental understanding of the world's many constantly changing communications paths and technologies [redacted] It also involves developing and fielding systems that capture signals and data, and bringing signals into the U.S. SIGINT system for further processing and transformation into actionable information for follow-on analysis and exploitation.

- ~~(S//SI//REL TO USA, FVEY)~~ ***Understanding and interpreting information*** includes using techniques such as cryptanalysis and language analysis on raw data, determining its meaning or significance by putting it in context, combining multiple sources of information, [redacted] and other activities that turn signals and data into usable intelligence.

- ~~(S//SI//REL TO USA, FVEY)~~ ***Sharing SIGINT information*** includes delivering actionable intelligence information to partners. [redacted] to provide real-time intelligence to troops in harm's way, policy-makers, [redacted] and to pass threat information to our allies. The net effect is that NSA provides actionable intelligence where and when it is most needed, saving lives and advancing the goals and interests of the U.S. and its allies.

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(U//~~FOUO~~) **IA Mission Activities** – Within the IA mission, the principal activities are **securing** [redacted] **conducting premier incident response** and sophisticated cyber hunt operations, and **advising and supporting federal information security efforts** and the security of key private sector and infrastructure systems.

- (U) ***Securing NSS*** by providing partners with flexible, timely, and state-of-the-art security solutions, as well as network engineering and field support. By analyzing current and future DoD, IC, U.S. government (USG), and commercial IA requirements and gaps, NSA delivers solutions, best practices, and strategies to secure the Nation's core operating environment. NSA also prescribes minimum standards, methods, and procedures for protecting cryptographic and other technical security material, techniques, and information related to NSS.

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[redacted]

- (U//~~FOUO~~) ***Conducting premier incident response*** and sophisticated cyber hunt operations by responding, as requested, to cyber breaches or intrusions across the USG. NSA performs network and system evaluations to determine how well entities with NSS comply with established safeguarding policies and standards. NSA also conducts 24/7 IA operations, proactively hunting for sophisticated cyber adversaries within national security networks.

- (U//~~FOUO~~) ***Advising and supporting federal information security efforts*** and the security of key [redacted] systems by providing specialized equipment, technical knowledge, or assistance from subject matter experts.

(U//~~FOUO~~) **Cybersecurity Operations** – Numerous NSA elements support and engage in CSO, using SIGINT and IA authorities to provide unique insights into foreign cyber actors' intentions and capabilities, to defend NSS against foreign intrusions, or to support USCYBERCOM.

(U) **Oversight and Compliance Activities** – NSA is committed to protecting privacy and civil liberties. NSA's General Counsel, Inspector General, Civil Liberties and Privacy Officer, Chief Risk Officer, and NSA Director of Compliance provide direction and guidance through training, reporting, auditing, and other work across NSA to ensure strict adherence, under Congressional oversight, to all laws, regulations, policies, and other applicable sources of and limitation on authority, including those relating to the rights of U.S. persons.

[redacted]

(U) **Research and Development Activities** – NSA must anticipate and keep pace with the rapid changes in technology that define and shape the mission environment. Accordingly, it conducts extensive research and development (R&D) activities that support its missions, discovering and developing the tools and techniques that will prepare NSA for the future. NSA employs a successful model that includes an in-house government R&D workforce and leverages

federally funded research and development centers such as the national laboratories, as well as academia and the private sector.

(U) **Information Technology Activities** – NSA requires a resilient and robust IT infrastructure to store, process, transmit, and protect information at extremely high speeds. NSA's IT professionals develop, engineer, implement, secure, and maintain its technology infrastructure and collaborate across the IC to find efficiencies in IT.

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(U) NSA's Role in the Intelligence Community

~~(S//REL TO USA, FVEY)~~ NSA's role in the IC is driven by several factors that make it unique: the nature of SIGINT, NSA's particular accesses and analytic and technical capabilities, and the synergy between its missions. SIGINT is a unique form of intelligence – it has been said that SIGINT is like "putting your head in the other team's huddle." SIGINT provides foreign intelligence information available through no other source, and at its most successful, SIGINT obtains the secrets that foreign adversaries and rivals are trying hardest to protect. As discussed above, NSA is able to provide SIGINT and IA insights and products because of its remarkable capacities [redacted]

(U) This combination of factors makes NSA an effective member of the IC in many ways. NSA contributes intelligence that is valuable in its own right and when combined with intelligence from other sources. NSA partners with other IC agencies to help them better achieve their mission objectives and contributes to the success of Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI)-level intelligence production. DIRNSA is a member of the DNI's Executive Committee. NSA also engages actively in ODNI-level functions and activities by aligning with the ODNI's strategic plans and objectives; participating in boards, panels and exchanges of personnel with other IC agencies; participating in the ODNI program and budget process; and through a variety of other efforts.

(U) Stakeholders and Partners

(U) NSA continuously supports and regularly engages with numerous external stakeholders and partners. The following provides an overview of these relationships.

(U) **Government** – NSA's robust and productive partnerships throughout the federal government yield mission results beyond what any individual agency could achieve alone. NSA provides its IC partners with resources including an extensive subject matter expert base in SIGINT, IA, and its other principal activities; world-class technical knowledge and information; robust analytic capabilities; premier incident response; and extensive language expertise. NSA regularly supports USG stakeholders and partners including the President of the United States, the President's Cabinet, the National Security Council, ODNI, IC agencies, numerous DoD organizations and commands, and the full spectrum of civilian agencies and departments.

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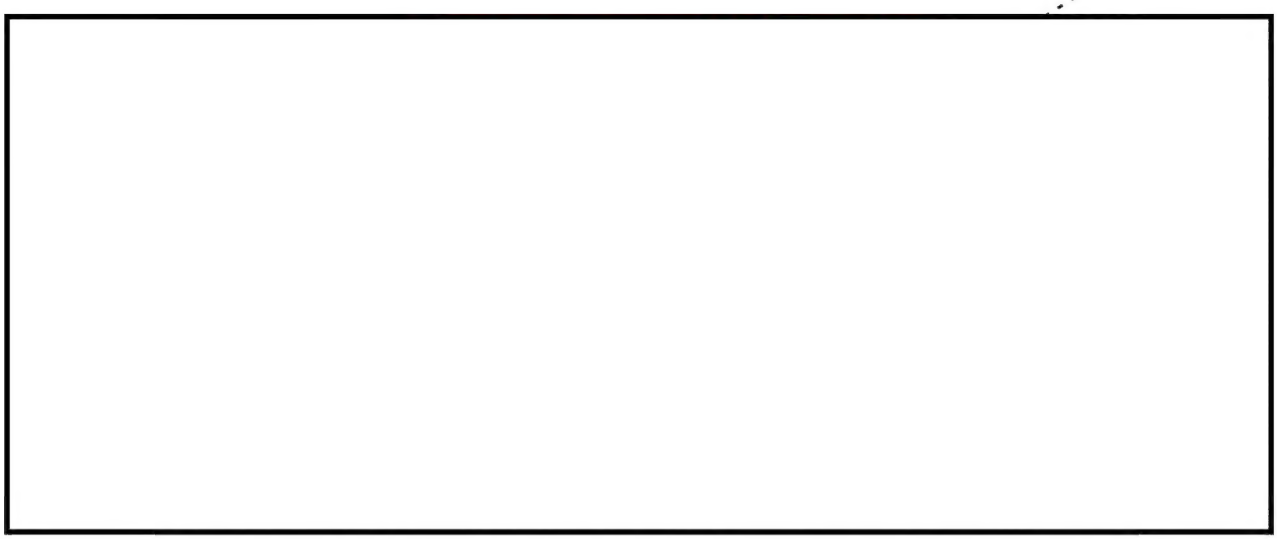

(U) **Academia** – NSA has an array of relationships with more than 500 academic institutions that advance its SIGINT and IA missions. These arrangements leverage academic expertise in key mission areas, strengthen our educational institutions, and help build the talent pool in fields vital to the Nation in general and the IC in particular, in areas such as science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), computer science, cybersecurity, and foreign languages.

(U) Conclusion

(U) NSA is an integral and essential member of the intelligence and defense communities, and its work contributes greatly to the mission success of its many partners. NSA's work helps save lives, advance U.S. goals and alliances, and defend vital networks, while protecting Americans' rights and liberties. The dedicated men and women of NSA come to work every day to defend our Nation and allies and secure the future.